

PS¹ENS MAR 10 2010 #2

COUNCIL ACTION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FOR
PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF MARCH 10, 2010

DATE REPORT ISSUED: March 2, 2010
ATTENTION: Council President and City Council
ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: City Planning and Community Investment Department
SUBJECT: Federal Grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration
for a Business Resource Center Initiative.
COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): Citywide
STAFF CONTACT: Meredith Dibden Brown 236-6485

REQUESTED ACTIONS:

Authorize the Mayor to apply for a Federal Grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration in the amount of \$95,000 for a Business Resource Center initiative.

Authorize the Chief Financial Officer to accept up to \$95,000 if the grant funding is secured; to establish a special interest-bearing account for the grant, if required; and to appropriate and expend the funds in accordance with the (approved) grant application, contingent upon receipt of a fully executed grant agreement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approve requested actions

BACKGROUND:

In March 2008, Office of Small Business staff was asked to submit a proposal for Federal Appropriation funds in the amount of \$200,000 to establish a regional, multi-faceted "One Stop" Business Resource Center that would serve as an information clearinghouse to help small businesses navigate through the myriad of service providers and local, regional, state and federal agencies.

The Center would include: a virtual Business Resource Center on the web; a number of public access computer kiosks modeled on the virtual Center to be deployed in City and partner agency facilities; and a comprehensive Business Resource Guide that would complement the information available on the virtual Center. Additionally, collateral materials would be produced to support business outreach and marketing efforts to increase awareness of the "One-Stop" Business Resource Center.

In August 2009, Office of Small Business staff was then asked to submit a formal application for \$95,000 (rather than \$200,000) since this amount had been included in the Federal Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Appropriations for the Business Resource Center initiative.

On January 28, 2010, Office of Small Business staff received the formal "Notice of Award" of \$95,000 for the Business Resource Center thus confirming that funding was truly allocated to the City of San Diego for the proposed purpose.

As approved the grant would provide for a virtual Business Resource Center on the web; one public access computer kiosk modeled on the virtual Center to be deployed in the City Administration building; four enhanced displays to be deployed in City facilities in outlying locations where computers are already installed; and a Business Resource Guide that would complement the information available on the virtual Center. Additionally, collateral materials

would be produced to support business outreach and marketing efforts to increase awareness of the Business Resource Center.

The virtual Business Resource Center is proposed as an interactive forum for business owners:

- Seeking information and resources from service providers, government agencies and other partners
- Wishing to contract with the city and other public entities to provide goods and services
- Desiring the convenience of completing forms and making payments on-line
- Networking regarding common business issues and business best practices
- Seeking demographic business information

Features would include:

- Clear steps to starting and expanding a business, with an emphasis on the San Diego region
- Information on City contracting opportunities and programs to assist businesses with the contracting process
- Resource guides and brochures
- Links to business tax applications and renewals with on-line payment
- Links to public agency websites
- Links to non-profit service providers
- E-newsletter updates
- Podcasts on business topics and available services
- Videos on business issues / tips and tools for new and existing businesses

More than 80,000 businesses are registered with the City of San Diego and of those, more than 93% have 12 or fewer employees. The City of San Diego is committed to providing services and assistance to all businesses but is particularly vested in assisting small businesses in recognition of the vital role they play in supporting the fabric of San Diego's communities and San Diego's regional economy.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There is no net fiscal impact since the grant funds of \$95,000 from a Federal Earmark appropriation are to be used to implement elements of a Business Resource Center which would not be developed otherwise.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):

Not applicable.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTION:

No previous Council action on this grant.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS:

Letters of support were received from various members of the small business community in March 2008 and were submitted with the request through the City's lobbyists to the Congressional offices of San Diego representatives.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS:

The key stakeholders are the more than 80,000 businesses registered with the City and prospective and existing business owners in San Diego County. These resources should assist local entrepreneurs with starting and growing their businesses.

William Anderson, FAICP
CP&CI Department Director

Jay M. Goldstone
Chief Operating Officer

